

# Report on community consultation over South Australia's time zone

5 February – 10 April 2015

## “What we heard”



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Government  
of South Australia

Department of  
State Development

**This report summarises what the government has heard through the initial phase of community consultation and the key themes and arguments raised in the submissions.**

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# Introduction

## The report

The Government of South Australia has asked the public to consider whether the state's time zone presents a barrier to our social and economic progress, and whether there is merit in changing the state's time zone from UTC +9.5.

This report summarises what the government has heard through the initial phase of community consultation and the key themes and arguments raised in the submissions. Public submissions have been sought by government through a series of public and stakeholder meetings and through the YourSAy website.

Submissions include letters, email and online comment, as well as verbal and written feedback.

The report focuses on the submission content so that all views and supporting evidence is fairly represented.

## The community engagement process

On 5 February 2015, Premier Jay Weatherill announced a state-wide consultation process to consider the merits of changing the state's time zone, to be led by Minister for Investment and Trade, Martin Hamilton-Smith.

The community engagement process is being implemented in three phases:

**Phase 1:** Seek initial community feedback on the proposal and identify key arguments for each of the options considered. The summary of this phase is contained within this report. If the government determines that there is a case for a change to the time zone, a second phase of consultation will proceed.

**Phase 2:** The Government of South Australia examine how to manage any proposed change process and resolve negative impacts within this report.

**Phase 3:** If required a bill is introduced by government into Parliament to amend the Standard Time Act 2009.

This report marks the completion of the first phase of consultation. Following the Premier's announcement, comment was sought online on the same date via the YourSAy website; through a dedicated email address; and by written submission. The Minister wrote to over 450 stakeholders individually to bring the process to their attention and solicit submissions.

Other key activities that have been undertaken include:

- Preparation of a short video 'The Time Zone Debate – Weighing up the Options', 3-4 minutes long, explaining the issue without favouring any specific option. The video was used online and as an introduction at face-to-face events
- Industry briefing with support from Brand SA
- Face-to-face 'Time Zone Conversation' events in key regional areas; Ceduna, Port Lincoln and Mount Gambier
- Further activity on the YourSAy website, based around the video and the schedule of roadshows, backed by a social media campaign to direct social media users to the online and face-to-face engagement processes
- A Time zone 'Great Debate' in Adelaide, as the culmination of the face-to-face events.

All the meetings were participatory, with a professional facilitator to ensure that those present had an opportunity to provide both oral and written comments. By the end of the process, nearly 2500 views and comments were received from individuals and organisations.

A reference group of six key stakeholders – with representatives of the farming community, the west coast, Aboriginal people, small business, financial sector and the arts – was established to provide independent and broad advice throughout the process.

## Time zone history

South Australia's first legislated time zone in 1895 was GMT+9,<sup>1</sup> half an hour behind the current time zone, which was later, adopted in 1899.<sup>2</sup> The key themes of the debate leading to the decision to shift the time zone in 1899 were similar to those raised in 2015. According to *The Advertiser* of 1 May 1899, the move forward was due to 'agitation by commercial men' about the need to be closer to Melbourne time for business purposes – in particular, to 'obviate the one hour advantage held by the eastern states in the sending of cablegrams' – supported by 'cricket and football circles', to obtain half an hour's extra daylight at the end of the day.

Between 1899 and 2015 there were a number of attempts to change the time zone one way or the other that failed to gather momentum. This included a campaign to divide South Australia into two time zones in 1986, with the area directly south of Queensland - meaning at the time 97 per cent of the population – moving to EST and the rest of the state remaining on its current time. In the past decade, there were private members' Bills introduced in 2005 - two competing bills, one to move forward half an hour, the other to move back half an hour – in 2009 and 2011, both to move back half an hour.

The current legislation governing South Australia's time zone is the Standard Time Act 2009. This in substance is the same legislation as the 1898 Act. The 1898 Act was amended in 2009, but this was a technical amendment only – reflecting the global adoption of UTC as the standard on which all time zones are based, in place of GMT. The suitability of the state's time zone remained an unresolved question.



1. Greenwich Mean Time<sup>2</sup>  
2. Graeme Davidson, 'Standard Time',  
in *Australian Historical Studies*, Volume 25  
No 99, October 1992, pp. 169-171

# Options considered

Three options were specifically canvassed in the consultation: the status quo; moving 30 minutes forward to Eastern Standard Time (EST); and moving closer towards Western Australian time.

South Australians were asked not only about their preference for the time zone, but also what other things might need to change at the same time, in order to mitigate any impacts of change.

Of those responses, 42 per cent wrote in favour of keeping UTC+9.5, 41 per cent favoured a shift west to UTC+9, 15 per cent favoured a shift east to UTC+10, and the remainder raised a variety of other options or were indecisive.

The depth of concern that is felt in some rural communities around early morning daylight hours was evident in the number of responses that were received. These numbers do not necessarily reflect state-wide sentiment on the issue, given the self-selection bias within the relatively small sample. Subsequent consultation will need to objectively evaluate community sentiment.



The key arguments made for and against each of the options raised can be summarised as follows:

## Option 1: Align with the eastern states (UTC+10)

### 1.1 Comments in support of changing to EST

- 1.1.1 It would boost our business opportunities: it would facilitate communication with east coast suppliers, customers and branch offices, and eliminate the confusion often arising around meeting times/ conference calls/travel times
- 1.1.2 It would eliminate problems with computer systems when time-aware applications such as online diaries are used between users from the east coast and South Australia. A number of respondents stated that a change in time would also create some difficulties with online systems/software but the once-off effort of fixing these would be outweighed by the long-term advantages in changing to EST
- 1.1.3 Tourists moving between the states would be able to make plans more easily without time changes. Most visitors to South Australia come from or through the eastern states
- 1.1.4 The current delay in broadcasts of TV news and entertainment would no longer apply
- 1.1.5 Increased benefit of having an additional 30 minutes of sunlight at the end of the day all year round, for outdoor activities, exercise, eating out and heading for the beach
- 1.1.6 The half hour difference feeds a perception that South Australia is out of touch. Some commenters went so far as to suggest that they did not care whether the time zone moved to UTC+9 or UTC+10, as long as the half hour goes.

### 1.2 Comments against changing to EST

- 1.2.1 Negative wellbeing impacts on the farming sector, which works to daylight hours
- 1.2.2 Exacerbating problems associated with children travelling to school in the dark mornings
- 1.2.3 Road safety issues stemming from darker mornings, including roadworks that would be made more dangerous with visibility problems, and the increased activity at dawn of native fauna
- 1.2.4 Scepticism towards the economic benefits associated with a move to EST given advances in technology and 24 hour communication
- 1.2.5 Focusing on business with the eastern seaboard means moving further away from our business partners in Asia
- 1.2.6 Some believe that changing to EST would be 'kow-towing' to the eastern states. This is not just about being proudly South Australian, but in the eyes of some, is also about seeking to differentiate South Australia in the market place for economic benefit. There was also a sense that South Australia's determination of a time zone that is considered most appropriate for South Australians is a proper exercise of state power
- 1.2.7 A number of potential sector specific problems were raised, which are addressed in more detail in the next section.

## Option 2: Move closer to Western Australian time (for example, UTC+9)

### 2.1 Comments in support of UTC+9

- 2.1.1 South Australia would adopt its 'natural time zone' to align with the state's geographical location<sup>3</sup>
- 2.1.2 Potential increase in business activity that could occur with South Australia's closer alignment with the time zones of our major trading partners in Asia, such as Japan and Korea (both UTC+9) and China, Singapore and Malaysia (UTC+8)
- 2.1.3 Overcome existing wellbeing effects felt in the west of the state associated with the current time zone and daylight savings, such as health, tiredness and behavioural problems
- 2.1.4 Removes the half hour difference and the associated negative perceptions.

### 2.2 Comments against UTC+9

- 2.2.1 Exacerbate problems associated with interstate travel, particularly for business travel to eastern states, in some cases requiring travel the night before, rather than early in the morning
- 2.2.2 Create yet another additional time zone across the country, as no other state or territory currently uses UTC+9. It would exacerbate current issues with such things as time delays in broadcasts
- 2.2.3 Result in darker evenings, with implications for some leisure and sporting activities
- 2.2.4 This option is driven by the sparsely populated west while the majority of South Australians live in the central or eastern parts of the state
- 2.2.5 New South Wales and Victoria are more important economically to South Australia than Asian markets
- 2.2.6 The 'natural time zone' argument, while it may be valid for primarily agrarian societies, is not convincing for modern societies with widespread availability of artificial lighting. They point out that the majority of time zones around the world are not properly aligned with 'natural time'. Many jurisdictions are more often biased towards light in the evening as a consequence of what have become normal working hours for the majority of the population.

## Option 3: Retain the current time zone (UTC+9.5)

### 3.1 Comments in support of keeping UTC+9.5

- 3.1.1 Lack of evidence associated with alternatives considered
- 3.1.2 Pride in South Australia - Why should we pander to the eastern states?
- 3.1.3 South Australia needs to embrace its own social and cultural identity and not constantly look to the eastern seaboard as being the cultural heart of our nation
- 3.1.4 Cynicism that this is a political distraction designed to take attention away from 'real' issues
- 3.1.5 Belief that technology and flexible working hours remove the need for any change
- 3.1.6 A change in time zones may require amendments to industrial awards and agreements which have times specified in them, an issue of particular concern to the construction industry.

3. South Australia's true time meridian – when the sun is overhead at midday - of 135 degrees E runs through the middle of the state just west of Port Lincoln. The present CST meridian is 142.5 degrees E, which runs through Warrnambool. During daylight saving the meridian is 157.5 degrees E near Lord Howe Island.

# Other options raised

## Create two time zones

One option proposed was the creation of two time zones for South Australia: UTC+10 in the east and UTC+9 in the west, which would enable concerns in the west about EST and impacts of daylight saving to be accommodated, while allowing the main population centres to take advantage of aligning with EST.

This could be implemented with a straight north-south line running east of Port Lincoln, for example, or adapted to suit local preferences. This solution would remove the half hour difference for everyone.

As one commenter stated: "The compromise is to split the state into two time zones: Eastern Standard Time for the eastern and central parts of South Australia where over 90 per cent of the population lives and 'true' Central Standard Time (one hour behind the east instead of the current half hour) for Eyre Peninsula, with the actual placement of the time zone boundary being guided by the preferences of the main population centres such as Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Lincoln as expressed through plebiscites."

The idea of two time zones was not explicitly canvassed by the government in its questions about the proposed time changes, so the numbers of responses to this idea cannot be compared with the other results. It may however warrant further investigation. Fifteen states in the United States have more than one time zone in use in the same state, and there is also an Australian precedent in New South Wales, where the city of Broken Hill currently uses South Australian time – half an hour behind the rest of the state.

## No change unless the NT changes too

Some comments, while favouring EST in principle, pointed out the complication of doing this if the Northern Territory did not also move.

Chief Minister of the Northern Territory Adam Giles has stated that a time zone change is not currently on his government's agenda and would not be without a push from Territorians accompanied by wide community engagement.

## Change or abolish daylight saving

Daylight saving was raised by many members of the public. Most mentioned was reducing the length of time that daylight saving runs for. While daylight saving is a separate issue from a permanent change in time-zone, it raises, particularly in the west of the state, the same issues of the impact of darker mornings and late sunsets.

Primary Producers SA, for example, believes that 'the daylight saving issue cannot be separated from the time zone debate'. Some commenters suggested that daylight saving be dropped or modified as a condition of support for their chosen option.

The daylight saving time period in South Australia was previously shorter, but was extended in 2009 in order to align to national starting and finishing times for states that observe daylight saving. Calls to reduce or eliminate daylight saving were made predominantly in the context of a scenario where South Australia's time zone remained unchanged or moved forward to UTC+10. A move back to UTC+9, for the western zone or for the state as a whole, would reduce the need to adjust the daylight saving time.

## Have a trial period or hold a referendum

Many comments reflected the need for a trial period or referendum before a change of this significance is made.

# Key issues

Proponents for opposing sides of the time zone debate often raised similar issues in the consultation period with alternative interpretations. Some of these issues are worth further discussion.

## Economic and business impact: General

### Business survey and economic modelling

The South Australian Centre for Economic Studies (SACES) of the University of Adelaide conducted a business survey on behalf of Business SA in 2008, to determine the degree to which businesses would be affected by a move to EST. The government asked SACES to carry out for comparative purposes, a similar survey in March 2015, but to also consider a shift to UTC+9.

A comparison of the two sets of responses is as follows:

	2008	2015
<b>Current time zone</b>		
No inconvenience	44%	42%
Little inconvenience	51%	53%
Major inconvenience	5%	5%
<b>Advantages of moving to Eastern Standard Time</b>		
No advantages	53%	38%
Minor advantages	42%	48%
Major advantages	5%	14%
<b>Disadvantages of moving to Eastern Standard Time</b>		
No disadvantages	71%	69%
Minor disadvantages	25%	21%
Major disadvantages	4%	10%
<b>Support a move to EST</b>		
Support a move to EST	56%	45%
Do not support a move to EST	37%	30%
Don't know	7%	25%
<b>Advantages of moving to UTC+9</b>		
No advantages	N/A	39%
Minor advantages	N/A	16%
Major advantages	N/A	12%
<b>Disadvantages of moving to UTC+9</b>		
Minor disadvantages	N/A	21%
Major disadvantages	N/A	16%

## 2008 survey

This was a survey of 303 businesses, 54 per cent in metropolitan Adelaide. The sectors covered represented 55 per cent of employment in South Australia.

The 2008 report found that businesses that relied on regular and effective communication with the eastern states would benefit especially media, aviation and manufacturing.

## 2015 survey

This was a survey of 119 – a combination of survey (mostly – 77), face-to-face interviews and other direct contacts.

The survey noted however, a very large difference between responses from the west coast and other responses: all responses from the west thought moving to EST would disadvantage them.

The 2015 survey also sought views on moving half an hour backwards: 39 per cent saw no advantage to their organisation, 12 per cent saw major advantages, 16 per cent saw minor advantages; 16 per cent saw major disadvantages and 21 per cent saw minor disadvantages.

## Results

The results are very similar: Quite substantial majorities (69-71 per cent) seeing no disadvantages in moving to EST, with solid numbers (47-62 per cent, and an increase in 2015), seeing actual advantages; more support for moving to EST than opposition to it; and majorities maintaining some degree of inconvenience is caused to them by the current time zone.

The numbers certainly do not represent a consensus, and it is noticeable that large majorities of those who said that they were inconvenienced by the current time zone, or would be advantaged by a move to EST, characterised the degree of inconvenience/advantage as 'minor'.

## Modelling

The 2008 SACES report went further in using the survey results to model financial impacts of a move to EST on the sectors covered by the survey. It found that there would be a net gain of \$569 million per annum, which would equate to \$670 million (in 2015 dollars), in moving to EST, comprising cost savings of \$118 million and revenue increases of \$451 million. The estimate was, however, subject to a high standard error of \$536 million.

The government has asked SACES to examine the modelling again in light of its further survey, to determine if these figures can be updated or improved.

## Dependence on the eastern states

Recent internal analysis of employment and exports done in the Department of State Development showed that nine per cent of South Australia's jobs are related to total overseas exports while 16 per cent are related to interstate exports.

The great majority of interstate exports go to the three states of the eastern seaboard, especially New South Wales and Victoria. This analysis shows that the economic interaction with the eastern states is considerably larger than that with international markets. It does not necessarily show, however, that a change of time zone would generate more or less economic activity.



## Business and Industry: Specific

Business SA 'continues to support the proposal for South Australia to move to EST due to the financial benefits it will deliver to our state'. It refers to the 2008 report it commissioned from SACES as evidence, as well as specific comments from members in 2015 which support the move from the perspective of facilitation of contact and communication with suppliers, customers and branch offices in the eastern states, which provides 'financial benefits as well as day to day operating benefits'.

Business SA also highlighted an academic study showing that time zones have a significant effect on decisions about the location of foreign direct investment – that investment flows are skewed towards investment in the same or closely aligned time zones as the investor – and the opportunity for South Australia to attract more investment by moving to UTC+10.

The Civil Contractors Federation – 560 member companies in the area of construction and maintenance of South Australia's infrastructure, and in commercial and residential building - is 'unable to support a change of time-zone at this time'. It notes that:

- The industry is historically an early starter where 7a.m. is the norm. Moving to EST would lead to more work in low or artificial light, with productivity and safety impacts
- Compensating by moving to later starts would bunch rush hour traffic with increased delays, and issues for safety of road workers as well as travellers, including school-children
- Native fauna are active at dawn, another safety issue in rural areas if more traffic is on the road at this time
- Members in the south east have no problems working across a time zone in Victoria.

The Master Builders Association (MBA) expressed similar views following a March 2015 survey of more than 100 members. More than 59 per cent of responses were against a time zone change of either sort. A number of businesses agreed that adoption of UTC+10 would benefit businesses with an interstate supply chain, but against that was set the impact on early starting businesses (the norm) with potential safety and productivity implications. This would be likely to affect smaller businesses, especially sub-contractors, disproportionately.

The MBA also pointed out that changing working hours to adjust would not only require a significant cultural change within the industry, it would be likely to come with added administrative costs as employers renegotiated employment arrangements, for example when penalty rates are applicable.

The Property Council expressed no view on these issues per se; it merely commented that it supports any reform with a tangible impact on economic growth, jobs creation and productivity, and that it would welcome a change in time zone if the State Government could demonstrate an impact of this sort.

The Defence Teaming Centre has canvassed the views of its members, and supports alignment with the eastern states. The defence industries primary customer is based in the eastern states and alignment would 'both boost business opportunities and improve travel schedules'. It also qualifies this statement by commenting 'it is clear this is not a significant issue for our members'.

The Council for International Trade and Commerce SA supports the change of time forward to UTC+10.

Coopers Brewery strongly supports alignment with Sydney and Melbourne, which would 'particularly from a marketing point of view... mean a practical step to make doing business with us easier. Approximately 60 per cent of our product sales are in the eastern states'.

The Resources and Engineering Skills Alliance, servicing the mining and energy sector, recommended alignment with the eastern states. It pointed out that this sector, which is forecast to increase its employment in South Australia substantially in the future, had much cross-border business, with many resources companies' head offices located in the east, and would benefit accordingly by a move to reduce complexities of doing business in South Australia for eastern-based businesses, including inward investment attraction. It also noted the significant fly-in, fly-out component of the workforce in this sector; it believed that alignment of time zones would offer 'opportunities and productivity gains in FIFO travel'.

## Electricity supply

A number of respondents argue that moving to UTC+10 would align South Australia's daily peak electricity demand with the eastern states. It is argued that this could cause electricity supply problems across the National Electricity Market during heatwaves.

The view of the Essential Services Commission (ESCOSA) is that 'it is difficult to perceive a half hour time zone shift having a material impact' and that 'it may be a relatively good time in the electricity generation cycle to contemplate a change in time zone'. ESCOSA notes in support that:

- South Australia's electricity demand is already very peaky. Highest demand is weather driven – when heatwaves affect South Australia and Victoria simultaneously – and has been handled without supply shortages in the past
- There are forecasts of higher imports across the Heywood interconnector, and it is being upgraded from 460MW capacity to 650MW (from July 2016)
- There is spare generation capacity in the market
- Increasing take-up of solar panels has decreased demand in the hottest part of the day. To the extent that a move to EST would move peak demand towards the hottest part of the day, solar might be expected to make more of a contribution than currently.

The Energy Markets Division of the Department of State Development (DSD) provided similar advice. It has conducted an analysis of aggregated demand data (South Australia and Victoria) on peak demand days, and found that a move to EST would have increased aggregate peak demand by only 0.23 per cent (on South Australia's peak demand day) or 0.11 per cent (Victoria's peak demand day).

With the interconnector upgrade and 'abundant generation capacity' (surplus capacity projected out to 2023-24 at least) DSD expects that a move to EST will not make the state's peak demand problem any worse or better; that it will not lead to supply problems; and that it is unlikely to result in higher wholesale prices.

## Other regulated markets

ESCOSA sees no impact from a change of time zone in other areas of its regulatory responsibility – gas, water and sewerage, shipping and rail.



## Airport curfew

The potential impact on flights to and from Adelaide Airport of a change in time zone was regularly raised. Most domestic and international flights to Adelaide are driven primarily by demand and connectivity factors at the point of origin or departure, not by Adelaide. To maintain local (non-Adelaide) timing in accordance with this would require a significant number of schedule changes by airlines, if the time zone moves, either way. There is a particular issue at the end of the day, during the 'shoulder' periods of the curfew when there are regulations restricting (or forbidding) landings and take-offs.

This is a complex and wide-ranging issue that would need working through with the airlines and the Adelaide Airport management if the government determines to make a change. What has been established to date, from individual airlines (Emirates, Cathay Pacific and Virgin), airport management and the South Australian Tourism Commission is:

- The viability of the Emirates' flight that departs Adelaide currently at 22.35 (during daylight saving months). A new departure time of 23.05 would be a breach of curfew
- Cathay Pacific would be happy with either the status quo or a change to EST – a change to EST would be of some assistance to their flight which arrives at 5.10a.m. in the northern summer period, by moving this to the 'more sociable' arrival time of 5.40a.m. However, a move back, to UTC+9, would be severely disruptive, as this would result in a 4.40a.m. arrival, not satisfactory for the airline and in any case, outside the permitted shoulder curfew period
- Virgin supports the alignment of South Australia's time zone with the eastern states, as 'streamlining trade and commerce between the state and the east coast'. It warns however, that any change in time zone will mean significant rescheduling of flights in response, and that IATA regulations require schedules and landing slots to be negotiated some time in advance - development of schedules for the IATA scheduling period of 27 March 2016 to 29 October 2016 will commence in July 2015
- There may be a loss of some overnight-based domestic aircraft in Adelaide and their crew operations. Currently, aircraft engaged in east coast operations can, in effect, add 30 minutes to their flying day through Adelaide's time zone if they arrive at the end of the day and stop overnight. About 18 aircraft overnight here at present
- In general terms, it is thought that a move to EST could inhibit future aviation capacity growth and connectivity to the Middle East and the Pacific, but Asian connectivity in the early morning now prevented by the curfew may benefit. Cathay Pacific is currently looking at putting on more flights
- The Minister for Investment and Trade has had initial discussions with affected companies. More detailed discussions are required to resolve aviation issues prior to advancing a proposition for change.

All the above is predicated on no change in curfew hours or operations. The curfew is determined under Commonwealth legislation.

## Tourism

The South Australian Tourism Commission notes that 'the largest visitation by volume to South Australia is from the eastern states'. It notes anecdotal evidence of some level of confusion and inconvenience among such visitors. Further, additional daylight in the evenings associated with the adoption of UTC+10 would be appreciated by visitors and hospitality businesses. It also thinks that facilitation of business dealings with the eastern states would be a plus for tourism related businesses. While moving slightly further out of alignment with Asia would make dealings there a little more difficult, SATC notes that Asian partners require very quick turnaround times and increasing the time difference is a marginal disadvantage.

SATC also reiterates the previous points regarding air travel, but believes they can be managed. Its summary is that moving to UTC+10 would 'not make a material difference', but the net impact on tourism and doing tourism business would be positive. Moving to UTC+9 would be a slight advantage in dealing with Asian clients, but it would provide no domestic benefits for doing business and 'the net result for tourism would be negative'.

Restaurant and Catering – the peak body representing South Australia's 2000 restaurants, cafes and caterers – supports a move to UTC+10, from a similar perspective of alleviating confusion and inconvenience for visitors, and the restaurants and cafes which cater to them.



## Schools

Feedback provided by members of the Association of Independent Schools reflected broader community sentiment of the issue. Metropolitan schools generally commented that there would be little impact on their operations by a change in time zone, either forward or backwards, but comment from rural schools varied according to location. Schools from the Spencer Gulf and west coast opposed a change to EST – citing problems of travel on darker mornings, and sleep deprivation resulting from lighter summer evenings – while those close to the Victorian border indicated little impact on their operations, and probable benefit to some in their communities.

The South Australian Primary Principals Association reports that, of the 10 per cent of schools who commented, 38 per cent support a move to UTC+10, 52 per cent support the current time zone and nine per cent support UTC+9.

## The impact on Broken Hill residents

The Member for Murray Darling, John Williams, has stated that he would recommend that Broken Hill change to EST if South Australia adopted UTC +9. Broken Hill's time zone is established by New South Wales legislation (as UTC+9.5), but can be relatively easily changed by a Governor's order in the Gazette.

## ICT issues

Problems associated with time-sensitive software, processes and systems were mentioned by a number of respondents. The Office for Digital Government's view is that the ICT community has dealt with daylight saving time zone changes in South Australia for a number of years now, with little or no disruption to ICT enabled services. It foresees minimal ICT impacts associated with a time zone change.



## Road safety

Many public comments, particularly from the west of the state, have emphasised the safety issues in the morning which might arise from moving to UTC+10 – because the mornings are darker for longer, there will be more traffic on the roads in darkness or semi-darkness. It is certainly true that statistics show that there are more road accidents at night (and at dusk and dawn) proportionate to amount of traffic on the road.

This applies at both ends of the day. A greater risk of accident in the darker mornings would come with a lesser risk in the longer light of the evening. There have been counter-arguments made that because there is more traffic usually on the road in the evening than early in the morning, a shift to UTC+10 would reduce road accidents overall.

Road safety, particularly for school children in the west of the state, is clearly an issue that would have to be thought through, with counter-measures devised to reduce the risk, if a change to UTC+10 were to be contemplated, but it is not the clear-cut, one-way issue that some have claimed.

## Outback perspectives

The Outback Communities Authority said 'the overwhelming theme (in its members comments) is that a change, especially a move to EST, is not supported... with today's technology dealing with other states is not compromised by current time differences... reasons behind the lack of support vary, however the primary focus is on the lack of sunlight well into the morning (and) the impact a change might have on school children, especially in the western parts of South Australia'.

It goes on to say, 'Of concern to those in the northern areas of South Australia is the potential need to spend more time outdoors in often extreme day time temperatures (of a move to EST, for those who have to work by the clock)'.

There was however 'some limited consensus' that 'if the time zone were to change it should be to one hour behind the eastern states'.

The Nganampa Health Council in the APY Lands notes that the APY Lands have traditionally operated on Northern Territory time – that is, it is an hour behind the rest of South Australia during the daylight savings period. This is because a number of its services are linked to Alice Springs; because of summer heat; and because the APY Lands extend west to the West Australian border. Its preference is that the APY Lands continue to base itself on Northern Territory time.

The Council observes also that there are some inconveniences involved in being behind the rest of South Australia during daylight saving – communication with agencies in Adelaide, for example – which would be exacerbated by a shift to UTC+10 in the rest of the state. A move which involved the APY Lands having to operate on EST would be even more disadvantageous.

## Farming and primary production

Primary Producers SA did an online survey of membership which attracted 1174 responses, and a result of:

- 52 per cent status quo
- 42.5 per cent one hour behind EST
- Five per cent EST

It commented that, while opposition to EST is widespread, 'it is on Eyre Peninsula that the problems are exacerbated' as 'already, they are living to a time line which does not reflect where they live'.

Concerns are around the impact on children (sleep deprivation and morning travel in the dark); that primary producers work to daylight hours and would be getting home (on EST) later with impacts on family life; that the benefits to business of a move had not been demonstrated; and a feeling that three one hour time zones is natural for Australia.

PPSA also believes that the daylight saving issue cannot be separated from the time zone debate: 'There does seem to be a very broad consensus that daylight saving is going for too many months'.

Regional Development Australia: Eyre Peninsula (RDAEP) notes the 'health safety and social impacts' of darkness issues associated with any move forward on an area where both major business sectors (seafood and agriculture) rely primarily on daylight and the position of the sun. It also notes the export orientation of the west, and its contribution to South Australia's total exports – 40 per cent of wheat, 100 per cent of tuna, very high percentages of other seafood. These exports increasingly depend on Asian markets, and would be negatively impacted by a change of time zone moving away from alignment with these markets, according to the RDAEP.

RDAEP also believes that there would be a similar negative impact on the pipeline of projects in mining and resources on the Eyre Peninsula which are aimed at export markets.

The South Australian Rock Lobster Advisory Council Inc (SARLAC) has advised that 'for operational reasons' its preference is no change.

The South Australian Wine Industry Association surveyed its members and found 55 per cent in favour of moving to EST, 24 per cent in favour of the status quo, and 21 per cent in favour of moving back half an hour. It characterised the reasoning of those supporting EST as to do with 'business related issues', and the support for a move back as to do with 'logic in the way the time of the world works'. SAWIA also commented that there was a consensus view that the issue is not a critical one for wine businesses.

The tuna industry would have an issue with a move to EST in that it needs to get freshly landed fish on the early 9a.m. plane to Adelaide at five degrees. The extra half hour of morning darkness – they cannot land fish in the dark – would make this impossible at certain times of the year.



## Festivals and events

Festivals Adelaide 'implores' the government to move to EST which will 'enable ease of communication... dealing with head offices, companies, talent and audiences in the eastern states', and remove the 'stigma' of a strange half hour time zone. Thirty minutes more sunlight in the evening will also boost leisure activity, as more will choose to go out rather than stay at home. It has consulted with the organisers of the 10 major cultural and arts festivals in Adelaide in reaching this position.

The Adelaide Entertainments Corporation – which runs the Entertainment Centre – was on the other hand 'unable to identify any economic benefits related to a change in time zone'. Its challenge is to build a more consistent year round profile of international touring events at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre, and it sees limited opportunities in that regard in a time zone change. Sometimes, it says, South Australia's existing time zone arrangements effectively buy tours an extra 30 minutes, which, in the very tight schedules which characterise international acts touring Australia, can be the difference between Adelaide securing a place on the schedule or missing out.

## Media

The ABC 'supports the proposal to align South Australia with Eastern Standard Time'. It would result in 'considerable cost savings' to the ABC, ensure local audiences receive news as it happens, and increase participation by South Australians in national discussions aired by the ABC.

It notes that operation across time zones is complex and costly – with scheduling issues especially with special events and breaking news, and costs incurred by delayed telecasts – and that it impacts on audiences, especially as in the digital age there are alternative real time online sources available.

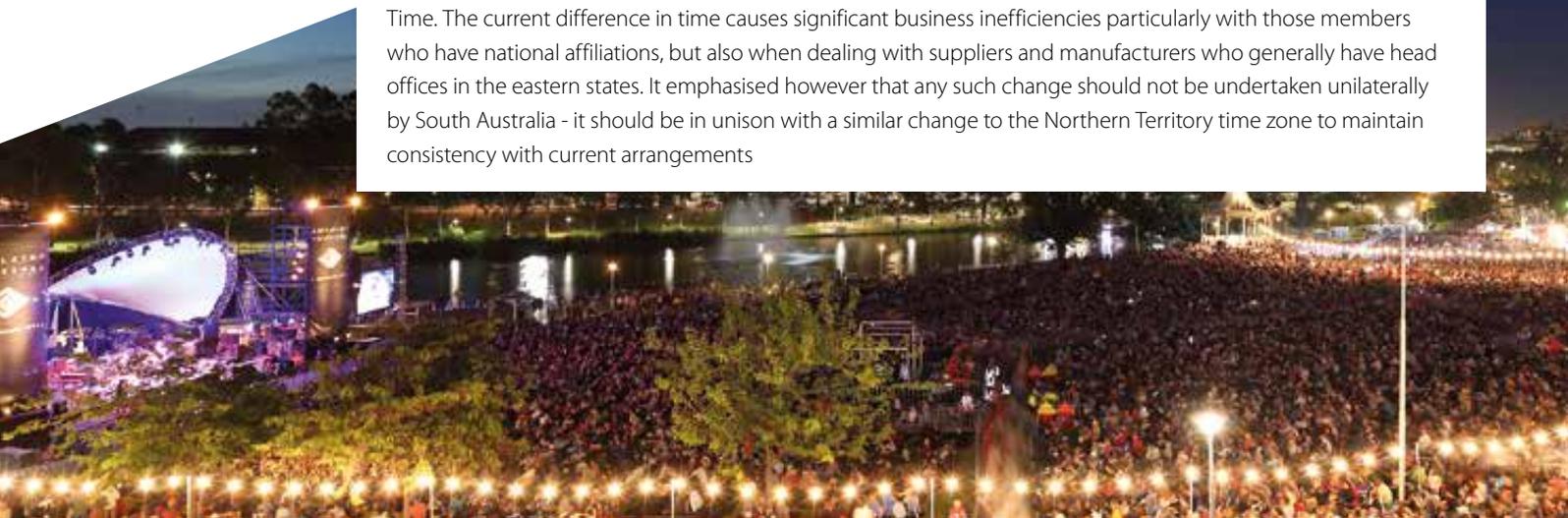
Aligning with EST 'might also provide opportunities for additional ABC production in South Australia, by ensuring that South Australian programs, could more frequently be used as 'Head of Network' national programs'.

The three free-to-air commercial networks made a joint submission strongly supporting alignment with UTC+10, pointing out that more than 1.2 million South Australians watch free to air television. They would benefit from up-to-the minute national news and current affairs; live interaction with the many entertainment and news programs that now have this feature, which is not accessible to South Australians as the programs are on 30 minute delays, and no spoilers. There would also be commercial benefits to the companies resulting from doing away with accommodating the 30 minute delay, including filler programs.

Some comments received from the commercial radio sector were also supportive of a move to align with the eastern states, instancing current problems with 'live' broadcasts particularly of sport, and logistics issues of coordination and timing of programs for networks with a national presence.

However, another radio network, while agreeing the difficulties the half hour time zone causes for taking satellite content in particular, was of the view that a clean hour's difference from the eastern states would also take care of that, and that 'for the balance of the state of South Australia, for the balance of rural families particularly in the west, and to keep with world time and world economies to which we are becoming a bigger part of, South Australia should move to an hour behind the eastern states'.

The National Electrical and Communications Association expressed the view that Australian Central Standard Time which covers both South Australia and the Northern Territory should fall in line with the Eastern Standard Time. The current difference in time causes significant business inefficiencies particularly with those members who have national affiliations, but also when dealing with suppliers and manufacturers who generally have head offices in the eastern states. It emphasised however that any such change should not be undertaken unilaterally by South Australia - it should be in unison with a similar change to the Northern Territory time zone to maintain consistency with current arrangements



## Health

The potential health impact of a move to EST has been mentioned by many respondents, especially the effect on schoolchildren. Dark mornings and early rising, plus in summer, late sunsets, reducing sleep time, leading potentially to sleep deprivation and psychological impacts were all raised.

The Department of Health has been asked to look into this. Its response was that it had not been able to find research around the potential public health impacts of a permanent time zone change of thirty minutes. The limited research available in this sort of area is mostly about daylight saving, or about movements across time zones and is related to transitional and transient effects. However the Department acknowledges adolescents are known to be a vulnerable group to changes in circadian rhythms, which can have complex health impacts in some cases. If a change in time zone did lead to chronic sleep loss, then this would have implications for school performances.

Sleep loss also has workplace and traffic safety implications, and affects workplace productivity.

Some comment, though, has also suggested possible positive health impacts of moving forward to UTC+10:

- Improved contact with medical professionals in the eastern states
- More daylight at the end of the day may lead to more physical exercise – though the evidence for this is mixed
- Positive economic impacts – if these resulted from a change of time zone - could generate positive health outcomes, which correlate strongly with greater opportunities for employment.



# Conclusion

The community engagement program which was completed on 10 April represented the first stage of a process towards potentially changing South Australia's time zone.

The intent of this report is to summarise issues raised with the Government by the community, not to draw conclusions from them.

The Government will consider further the issues raised during the consultation, and any reaction to the report, with a view to formulating a position on which, if any, option for changing South Australia's time zone, to take forward.

It is intended (if any change is recommended) that there then be further public consultation around the proposed option.

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Published May 2015.

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